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I hope I have succeeded in making my point of view sufficiently clear. I should be glad if any of those who disagree with it would explain exactly the nature of their objections.

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"MORAL DISTINCTIONS."

IN a note under the above title in the *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ETHICS*, Vol. III. No. 3, Mr. Neville Tebbutt accuses me of neglecting certain obvious moral distinctions:

1. I ignore the distinction between theft, lying, dishonesty, on the one hand, and the failure to live up to the highest ideal or to give up my leisure and comforts to relieve a poor neighbor, on the other.

2. I ignore the distinction between self-regard and other-regarding conduct, between prudence and morality.

Mr. Tebbutt himself apparently would divide life into three parts. First, there is the field of self-regarding acts which have no moral quality. They "concern myself," and are, in a sense, below morality. Next there is the sphere of moral obligation, with which you "may require me to do my duty,"—*e.g.*, to be honest and truthful. Above this is the field of merit, where I may "please myself how I act." I am praised, perhaps, if I live up to my first ideal, but "I am not bound to," and am not blamed if I do not.

In support of these contentions, Mr. Tebbutt appeals to the "ordinary sensible man of affairs," who is not troubled with theological or supernatural scruples,—he might have added with scruples of any kind.

To take the second of these accusations first. If Mr. Tebbutt had turned to page 186 of my "*Elements of Ethics*," he would have seen that I admit the distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding acts. I may do so, however, as a convenient mode of classification. On page 181 I give my reasons for this limitation. How important it is to recognize them, and so avoid the fallacy of pressing a logical distinction into the service of an immoral theory of life is illustrated by Mr. Tebbutt's confusion. It is true that insobriety (to take Mr. Tebbutt's instance) may be said to injure myself primarily and others only secondarily. But it requires little reflection to perceive that this is only a superficial distinction. That it is so may be shown by asking where does the "self" end

and "others" begin? Is my wife a part of that self, or my trade, or the society in which I live? Without them, clearly I would be different from what I am, even to a greater extent than if I lost a hand or a foot from the body, which is sometimes thought of (though not by the "ordinary man") as the true self. And if this be true, sobriety may be as much a duty we owe to others as honesty and truthfulness are.

I need not labor this point, but pass to the other accusation Mr. Tebbutt brings against me. What lends color to it is the obvious distinction between those duties which it is necessary to observe, if there is to be any social life at all, and those which the good man acknowledges over and above. The former are the conditions (to borrow Aristotle's antithesis) of living at all, the latter of living well. Hence, the former are those which, as the rudimentary conditions of self-preservation, society exacts on the pain of fine, imprisonment, or death. Society has to exact them, and its members have to observe them, on pain of material loss, and possibly of extinction. A man who pays his debts and keeps his hands off his neighbor's person and purse may be said to be good enough to be left alone by the police. But it would be more correct to say that he is as bad as he can be consistently with the survival of himself and the society to which he belongs. The *law* may not demand anything else of him, *morality* certainly does. It requires not only that he should be good enough to elude the policeman, or to be considered a respectable member of society, but that he should be as good as he can,—in other words, that he should "live up to the highest ideal" he possesses.

This view, like the previous one, has the support of all the "ordinary sensible men" I know. None of them, so far as I am aware, holds that when he has kept his word, performed his part of a bargain, and abstained from theft in his business transactions, he has done his duty, and for the rest of the day "may please himself." They recognize the duty, when they reach home, of being "sober, cheerful, and patient." Some of them even recognize a further duty of giving up some of their leisure and comforts to attend a political meeting or a committee of the poor-land guardians. If they did not do any of these things, and confined their efforts to the elementary duty of keeping out of gaol, I should not consider them "sensible men of affairs." I should regard them as "suspicious characters," and keep an eye upon them.

This must not, of course, be taken to mean that the good man

is the man who is always acting from a sense of duty or consciously living up to his highest ideal. On the contrary, by a familiar paradox, a man can only do his duty by forgetting to think about it; by interesting himself in the business on hand and not in his motives for doing it.

Whether in any particular case (to return to the question with which Mr. Tebbutt starts) "we have as much moral right to find fault with a man for not giving up his leisure and comforts to relieve a poor neighbor as with one who breaks his bargains," will depend upon circumstances. I may be more blamable for letting a neighbor starve than for not paying my tailor's bill when I promised to pay it. If it be replied that we are speaking of characters and not of particular acts, this ought to have been plainer; but it makes no difference. It is again a question of degree and circumstance whether the man who habitually neglects to pay his debts is more reprehensible than the man who is habitually selfish in respect to his leisure and comforts.

In the second part of his note, Mr. Tebbutt raises the question, "By what means do we determine whether conduct falls within or without the area of moral obligation?" It is the less necessary to consider his answer to it, first, because it is only after we have divided life, as Plato would say, "with a hatchet," that there can be any problem here at all; and, secondly, because, on Mr. Tebbutt's own admission, his solution will be "shocking to many persons," and is therefore unlikely to find acceptance with the ordinary man.

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REPLY TO A REVIEW.

M. RAUH, the author of "*Essai sur le Fondement Métaphysique de la Morale*," which we reviewed in the April number, has sent the following brief reply:

"The principal fault with which you reproach me, the obscurity, I also recognize. But I do not think there is in my work a 'begging the question,' which you see there. When I said, at the outset, that the end of philosophy is the justification of the humble man, I simply stated the problem. If I have succeeded in proving, in the latter part, that incarnate reason is in effect the type of absolute certitude, I have justified in this way that statement of the philosophical problem. I know no other means of exposition than to first state the problem, then to give the solution of it. And, according to this, every announcement of a theory to be demonstrated would constitute a 'begging the question.'"